

STATEMENT BY PRESTON JAY MOORE OF OKLAHOMA, PAST NATIONAL  
COMMANDER OF THE AMERICAN LEGION BEFORE THE HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE  
ON STATE DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION AND FOREIGN OPERATIONS  
THURSDAY, MAY 20, 1965

Mr. Chairman:

I am here in a private capacity. The role of the Department of State in the formulation and execution of foreign policy has always been of intense interest to me. Recently, as Chairman of the American Legion Special Liaison Committee to the State Department, it was my privilege to study extensively the organization and functions of the Foreign Service and the Department of State.

In its study of the State Department, the Legion Liaison Committee (a non-partisan five-member group) carefully examined personnel organization and management in Washington and at a number of posts abroad. In our travels we realized the importance of a unified U.S. program abroad under strong central direction. Our great private enterprises could never function as efficiently as they do if the various components of a single company acted independently of one another. H.R. 6277 will serve to

provide the Foreign

provide the Foreign Service of the United States with a greater degree of unity in its structure and operations. I believe it is an essential step forward in developing a Foreign Service that is flexible and strong enough to cope with the unrelenting complexities that are our burden in this world.

Rather than burden you with a lengthy dissertation I would like to quote from the Report prepared by my Committee following its study. (At this point, I wish to point out that the report was prepared by a Special Committee of the Legion and is not official Legion policy). The Committee made a number of carefully reasoned and unanimously approved observations and recommendations. Included among them were the following:

"The Committee recognizes that the State Department must cope with more personnel problems than any other agency of the Government, with the possible exception of the Department of Defense. This is due partly to the fact that it must administer large numbers of employees under a variety of personnel systems, principally the Foreign Service and the

Service and the Civil Service systems, both of which are extremely complex and, at the same time, completely different from each other."

"The Foreign Service of the United States should represent the entire U.S. Government abroad. Any civilian agency, the primary mission of which involves the conduct of domestic programs, but which has legitimate interest abroad, should exercise those interests through the Department of State. If the necessary skills do not exist within the Department, the agency in question should detail officers for appointment as Foreign Service Reserve Officers. They would not lose their allegiance to their particular agency, but would operate within the framework of the Foreign Service...."

"The Department should intensify its efforts to weed out mediocre personnel by increasing materially the number selected out on the basis of Selection Board evaluations."

Speaking as an individual, I am pleased that Congressman Hays has seen fit to introduce legislation which will, in effect, carry out these recommendations. I strongly

endorse H.R. 6277

endorse H.R. 6277 with the exception of the section which specifies that the Veterans Preference Act of 1944 shall not apply to employees of the Foreign Service. I believe that the principles which brought the Veterans Preference Act into existence are still applicable and justify its continuance.